

**City of Woodstock
Special City Council Budget Workshop
April 13, 2015
Council Chambers**

MINUTES

A special Budget Workshop meeting of the Woodstock City Council was called to order by Mayor Brian Sager at 3:30PM on Monday, April 13, 2015 in the Council Chambers at Woodstock City Hall. Notice of this Special Meeting was posted 48 hours in advance at Woodstock City Hall. All media was notified of this Special Meeting. All Council members were notified of this Special Meeting.

Mayor Sager stated that the purpose of this meeting is a budget workshop to discuss the FY2015/2016 Budget.

A roll call was taken.

Council members present: Julie Dillon, Maureen Larson, RB Thompson, Mark Saladin, Joseph Starzynski, Michael Turner, and Mayor Brian Sager.

Staff present: City Manager Roscoe Stelford, Finance Director Paul Christensen, Human Resources Director Deb Schober, Public Works Director Paul Ruscko, Opera House Director John Scharres, Library Director Nick Weber, Police Chief Robert Lowen, Recreation Director Dave Zinnen, Community and Economic Development Director Cort Carlson, Assistant Public Works Director Jeff VanLanduyt, Deputy Chief of Police John Lieb, Opera House Box Office Manager Daniel Campbell, Opera House Building Manager Mark Greenleaf, Opera House Production Manager Joe McCormack, Economic Development Coordinator Joe Napolitano, IT Manager Dan McElmeel, Grant Writer Terry Willcockson, Opera House Production Assistant Nathan Knapke, and Chief Deputy Clerk Cindy Smiley.

Mayor Sager noted that a quorum was present.

DISCUSSION – FY2015/2016

Mayor Sager commended City staff for the work they have put in on the budget document, stating that he is grateful for staff's efforts in putting the document together and formulating the budget.

P. Christensen gave an overview of the current status of the funds and where the fund balances are expected to be at the end of this fiscal year. He stated that the finances of the City of Woodstock are in good shape and that this budget moves dollars into the CIP which had more projects than available funding. He also indicated that there has been a positive turnaround in the Water and Sewer Fund. RB Thompson commended staff on the new budget format stating that it is more efficient and transparent. Mayor Sager also stated that he likes the new format which is more readable and provides good comparisons.

Mayor Sager indicated the following items that he would particularly like to discuss in more depth and possibly change the requested funding:

- 1) Funding for the grant opportunities identified by staff from Major League Baseball and for Zimmerman Stormwater Improvements.

In response R. Stelford stated that he was proud to announce that the City has received high scores on both CDBG grant applications submitted by staff, particularly commending Grant Writer Terry Willcockson on her efforts. He stated that with the high scores, it is expected that both applications will receive funding, rather than just one. This means, however, that the City will need to fund their portion of the Zimmerman Stormwater Improvement Project, as well as the Walnut/Ash Project already in the budget, requiring an additional \$45,000.

In addition, Major League Baseball has indicated that, in order to receive their grant for Ballfield A, the City would need to provide an additional \$12,000 in funding to make further improvements to the field.

- 2) Additional funding for the Façade Improvement Program. Mayor Sager expressed concern that funding for this Program has been reduced and would like to see it brought back up.
- 3) TIF – Mayor Sager stated that he is interested in further discussion of the stone veneer for the wall of the Park in the Square which is projected to cost \$450,000.
- 4) Woodstock Renaissance Project – Mayor Sager requested further discussion of the \$150,000 that has been placed in the budget for this item.
- 5) Recycling Bins for the Square – Mayor Sager requested discussion on whether Council is supportive of adding funds to the budget for special recycling bins for the Square.
- 6) Shop Local Campaign – Mayor Sager indicated that he has been working with the Woodstock Independent on a project that would provide the City use of the paper's flag banner for one year at a cost of \$7,500. He stated this could be used in many ways, including, but not exclusively, for a Shop Local Campaign.
- 7) Video Gaming Revenue – Mayor Sager also requested a discussion of allocation of the video gaming revenue currently estimated to be \$160,000.

A discussion following concerning video gaming. In response to a question from M. Turner, R. Stelford stated that the revenue is set by the state at 5% and, thus, the City is not able to increase the percentage received by the City. In response to another question, he stated that the maximum fee charged by a non-Home Rule community allowed by the state is the \$25.00 per terminal currently charged by the City.

Mayor Sager suggested allocating a portion of the video gaming revenue to the Hotel/Motel Tax Fund.

In response to a request from Mayor Sager for any specific items Council members wish to discuss, M. Larson stated she would like to investigate and discuss providing Wi-Fi on the Square. M. Saladin stated he would to have further discussion concerning the Special Census. In response to a question from M. Turner, R. Stelford stated that the City would receive an additional \$150 per year per new resident identified through the Special Census. Councilman Turner pointed out that the Census then would pay for itself in 6 years. In response to further questions, R. Stelford briefly described the Special Census process, stating that it would bring revenue to the City that would not be captured until 2022, following the 2020 dicennial census.

There being no further questions or comments, Council turned to the review of specific sections of the FY15/16 Budget document.

General Fund Revenues

Following a discussion of dedicating revenue, such as video gaming revenue, to specific projects, there was consensus that this is appropriate. M. Larson stated she feels that bringing WiFi to the Square would be one such project, with the Shop Local Program being another. M. Saladin supported the Hotel/Motel Tax Fund and M. Turner was in favor of funding the Façade Improvement Program.

After further discussion, it was the consensus to allocate \$20,000 of the Video Gaming revenue to the Hotel/Motel Tax Fund, with \$8,000 of that to bring the fund back up and \$12,000 to increase the fund.

After further discussion, it was the consensus to allocate \$7,500 to the Shop Local Campaign, to be called the Banner Campaign. It was noted that the banner will be used to promote other things in the community as well as “Shop Local.”

Discussion followed of WiFi on the Square. It was the consensus of Council not to allocate funds for this project at this time but to have Staff further explore this project, including methods and costs involved. M. Turner also requested information on the City’s ability to charge for WiFi would could make this revenue neutral and bring people to the Square.

General Government

There was no discussion.

Finance

Mayor Sager commended the Finance Department on the new utility billing program.

Human Resources

In response to a question from M. Saladin, D. Schober stated that the funds spend on labor relations in FY14/15 were for the Special Labor Counsel for issues such as mediation.

Building and Zoning

A brief discussion ensued concerning the City establishing a Health Department, what would be required, and under what department it would fall. M. Turner stated he would be interested in investigating this in the future when the City achieves Home-Rule Status.

Streets

Mayor Sager commended staff for continuing to look at alternatives for resurfacing and repair of the streets that are more cost effective. He encouraged them to continue to do so, looking a new technology and collaborations with other units of government.

Mayor Sager also stated that at some point Council needs to have a serious conversation about the possibility of bonding major improvements to get ahead instead of always trying to catch up.

Discussion followed of salt with R. Stelford and P. Ruscko noting that the City's storage facilities are full for next year, giving the City 2/3 of its estimated need, and that the price of salt has dropped.

Fleet Management

No discussion.

DPW Administration

No discussion.

Recreation Department

Mayor Sager commended the Recreation Department for its diversity of programs.

Community Events

RB Thompson suggested enlisting the Cultural and Social Awareness Commission to help include the Hispanic population in Summer in the Park. M. Larson commended M. Amraen and B. Vidales on the Senior Program held weekly at Stage Left Café.

Economic Development Department

R. Stelford stated that staff is working to move this Department forward, noting that the open Economic Development Coordinator position has been included as part of the hiring freeze. He further stated, however, that as long as LGDF appears safe from state cuts, the City may wish to reconsider this and fill the position as soon as possible.

M. Larson requested that staff explore what type of businesses would be a good fit for Woodstock and actively recruit them. She is hopeful that the TAP and Promote Woodstock will help with this.

Audit

No discussion

Police

In response from a question from Mayor Sager, Chief Lowen stated that the Department now has 37 sworn officers, down from a high of 41. He also noted that the City has two part-time Community Service Officers.

Mayor Sager stated that he appreciates the Police Department, noting that "Officer Friendly" is still very important in Woodstock.

Discussion followed of how 37 officers vs. 41 impacts residents, noting that it would not be a good argument to say that the crime rate would go down if the City had another officer. He noted that the

increased crime statistics are a result of other things, such as increased security programs at WalMart and Kohl's resulting in more apprehensions of shoplifters.

After further discussion, it was the consensus of Council to not increase funding for additional police officers in this budget year but that the City should begin moving toward the 41 figure in future years.

In response to further questioning, Chief Lowen stated that the Department could use additional less than lethal equipment and that body cameras are needed. He further stated that he and Terry Willcockson are working on grant opportunities, including one for two new bicycles.

Mayor Sager stated that summer could bring additional complaints from the Square and requested that the Police Department get on top of these early with a program similar to that which was used last year.

Discussion followed of an Ambassador Program in which volunteers would serve both as a guide and resource to visitors and "eyes" for the Police Department.

Discussion followed of placing cameras on the Square, with staff noting that business owners were not receptive to this program. D. McElmeel provided information concerning placement, costs, and resolution provided by the cameras. He also discussed how these would be monitored.

It was the consensus of Council that the possible benefits and drawback of both Ambassador Program and cameras on the Square be explored further by staff.

Aquatic Center

In response to a question from Mayor Sager, D. Zinnen stated that all present drainage issues have been resolved and that the facility is longer under any stipulations.

Recreation Center

Mayor Sager commended staff on the programs offered at the Rec Center and noted that this is a building with high usage that requires routine maintenance.

Parks

In response to a comment from RB Thompson, R. Stelford noted that funds are included in the budget to re-do the bump outs.

Discussion followed of the turf in the Park in the Square, with R. Stelford noting that the Haunted House is very hard on the turf. Parks staff has changed the grass seed mixture to a "tougher" mix and this year will be asking the Farmers Market to use protective mats around their booths.

Recess

Council recessed at 5:06PM.

Return to Open Session

Council reconvened at 5:15PM

Parks, cont'd

Discussion continued regarding Parks Maintenance with P. Ruscko noting that the decorative urns on the Square will no longer be maintained by the Garden Club. He further noted that maintenance of the City's Parks and public spaces is becoming increasingly more challenging as staff is asked to take on more responsibilities as volunteer groups retire. M. Turner noted that he wishes to see the City's fields remain in great shape and urged staff to look at next year's budget to determine if more staff is needed.

In response to further comments, P. Ruscko noted that the Department of Public Works already utilizes students to assist with projects.

Opera House

In response to a question from J. Starzynski concerning the programming at the Stoughton Wisconsin Opera House as compared to the Woodstock Opera House, J. Scharres stated that the Woodstock Opera House is a rental venue while the Stoughton facility presents promoted events. In addition, the Stoughton Opera House has a larger seating capacity and draws from a different area. Mr. Scharres also noted that the staff of the Woodstock Opera House has been a long-time mentor of the staff in Stoughton.

In response to a comment from M. Larson to try to engage more well known, expensive acts to draw from a larger area, D. Campbell noted that if the area extends out too far, the Opera House would be trying to draw customers who can go to other theatres closer to the City to see the same acts at a reduced price. Discussion followed to ticket price vs. performer vs. venue size.

M. Turner thanked the Opera House staff, City Manager R. Stelford, and the Police Department for their efforts provided to facilitate the Governor's visit. Mayor Sager also expressed his appreciation to the Opera House staff for their technical skills and noted that the Stage Left Café is a tremendous asset to the community.

Library

RB Thompson noted that N. Weber has brought a new perspective to the position and is looking at the facility in a new way which is very effective. Mayor Sager noted that he appreciates the programming offered at the library.

NISRA

A brief discussion followed of the SEDOM Program and its future, which is uncertain at this time.

Utility Revenue – Water and Sewer

R. Stelford noted that the Administration is proposing a 5% increase in Water and Sewer rates. He stated that even with the increase, Woodstock would place third from the bottom in survey of water rates in surrounding communities.

Discussion followed of stormwater issues in various areas of the community and efforts that have been undertaken to mitigate these. P. Ruscko noted the grants which staff is pursuing for projects on Walnut/Ash and Zimmerman Road. Mayor Sager noted that at some time in the future Council may wish to consider bonding drainage issues as well as street resurfacing to fund long-term solutions.

TIF

Mayor Sager noted that many dollars have been put into the Old Courthouse and stated that he strongly supports extending the TIF District. He further stated that the City must have a dialogue with the other taxing bodies. He also noted that he is concerned about financing the Old Courthouse at the expense of the Façade Improvement Program.

C. Carlson described some of the buildings that are awaiting possible funding, with Mayor Sager noting that this indicates increased interest and increased investment.

Jim Prindiville stated that the City's assistance with repairs and rehabilitation of the outside of buildings through the Façade Improvement Program is essential so that property owners such as himself can complete the rehabilitation of the interiors of the buildings.

Following discussion of various funds/lines from which funds could be taken to fund the Façade Improvement Program, including the "turf fund" and video gaming revenue, it was the consensus of Council to increase the Façade Improvement Program to full funding.

Library Building Fund

No discussion

Social Security Fund

No discussion

IMRF

No discussion

MFT

P. Christensen noted that certain expenses previously fund through the MFT fund have been transferred elsewhere so that more MFT dollars can be used for street improvements. He further noted that this is one change staff has made to make dollars go further.

Park Development Fund

In response to a question from RB Thompson, R. Stelford noted that building permits are still down from their high, but that Woodstock has seen an increase. He further noted that it is the Administration's wish, in order to get some of the parcels developed, to renegotiate some of the development agreements that were negotiated during better economic times.

Discussion followed of land donation vs. cash donation and of infill development.

Special Census

Following some discussion, it was the consensus of Council to proceed with including funds for the Special Census in the FY15/16 Budget in order to capture new growth before 2022.

Administrative Adjudication

No discussion.

Wireless Alarm

No discussion.

Paratransit

It was noted that there have been improvements made to some bus stops.

Debt Service

Discussion followed of this fund and its schedule for the next five years.

Library Debt Service

No discussion.

Water & Sewer Maintenance

No discussion.

Water & Sewer Administration & Debt

No discussion.

Utility CIP

No discussion.

Utility – Capacity CIP

No discussion.

Police Pension Fund

No discussion.

Health/Life Insurance

There was general discussion concerning this fund, including fees and stop loss. D. Schober also noted that the Affordable Care Act has had significant impact on costs in this fund.

General Fund CIP

It was noted that there is over \$1,000,000 dedicated to Streets & Sidewalks.

R. Stelford discussed changes that were made to the CIP, including a number of routing maintenance items being moved to operating expenses to free-up more funds for CIP projects.

It was the consensus to include \$57,000 in funding to support grant applications currently under consideration, with M. Turner suggesting taking \$12,000 from the “turf project” to support the grant from Major League Baseball.

Discussion then turned to the “turf project” and funding proposed to be donated to the D200 Renaissance Project. M. Turner expressed his support of this project. Mayor Sager indicated that, while he is supportive, he has the following concerns:

- 1) Safety of the proposed product;
- 2) What type of usage would the City make of this facility;

- 3) Should one taxing body give dollars to another taxing body when the latter is larger;
- 4) What about an on-going agreement and what type of guarantees does the City wish to have.

Mayor Sager further stated that he is very supportive of cooperation between governmental bodies, but is concerned about whether the District 200 Board has bought into this project. He would prefer to view the two bodies as partners, with the D200 Board approving a contribution equal to the City's. He further stated that he feels it would be inappropriate for the City Council to approve donating \$150,000 to this project if the District does not contribute to it, and, further, feels that the District's contribution should be equal to or greater than the City's.

M. Turner stated that he is supportive to seeing where the D200 Board stands on the project and wishes, also, to be seen as partners with the District.

M. Saladin agreed that District 200 should fund a portion of the project and also that it should be clear what the City's use of the facility should be. He commented that the City should be cautious and seek more answers.

Following further discussion, it was the consensus of Council to reduce the amount of proposed funding in the budget for the "turf project" to \$100,000, with the understanding that this item must come back to Council for actual funding which will be dependent upon the following:

- 1) Further information concerning the safety of the product proposed for the turf;
- 2) Further information regarding District 200's contribution to the project;
- 3) Obtaining a written agreement for Council's review and approval stipulating the City's usage for the facility.

Discussion followed of extension of the TIF.

Discussion followed of the stone veneer on the Park in the Square wall, with RB Thompson and Mayor Sager expressing support of this project. Following further discussion, it was the consensus that there are not funds available at this time to undertake such an expensive project, which is estimated to cost \$450,000 and that other projects in the budget should take precedence over the veneer. It was also the consensus of Council to perform a detailed analysis of the cost of the veneer project within the next six months.

Summary

Mayor Sager and R. Stelford summarized the following items on which Council has reached consensus concerning the FY15/16 Budget:

- 1) An additional \$57,000 for grant matches, i.e. Zimmerman Stormwater Improvements and Ballfield A/MLB;
- 2) An additional \$42,000, bringing the total to \$66,000, for the Façade Improvement Program;
- 3) An additional \$8,000 for the Banner/Marketing Program;
- 4) An additional \$20,000 will be taken from video gaming revenue and placed in the Hotel/Motel Tax Fund;

- 5) Proposed funding for the D200 Renaissance Project was reduced to \$100,000 with funding pending further information and discussion;
- 6) No funds will be budgeted this year for recycling bins on the Square;
- 7) Investigate the cost of WIFI on the Square;
- 8) Investigate the benefits and drawbacks of an Ambassador Program for the Square;
- 9) Investigate the benefits and drawbacks of placing cameras on the Square;
- 10) Investigate the cost of completing the stone veneer project on the wall in the Park in the Square.

ADJOURN

Motion by Mt. Turner, second by M. Saladin, to adjourn to the next regular meeting of the Woodstock City Council at 7:00PM on April 21, 2015 in the Council Chambers of Woodstock City Hall. Aye: Dillon, Larson, Saladin, Starzynski, Thompson, Turner, and Mayor Sager. Nays: none. Abstentions: none. Absentees: none. Meeting adjourned at 6:35PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Cindy Smiley
Chief Deputy Clerk